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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000268

SIPDIS

DOE FOR GPERSON, CHAYLOCK
TREASURY FOR DFIELDS, AIERONIMO, RHALL
DOC FOR 3317/ITA/OA/KBURRESS
STATE PASS USTR FOR AGAMA
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 20 YEARS

TAGS: PGOV PREL NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: OGUN STATE GOVERNOR RUMORED IMPEACHED BUT
NOT

Classified By: CONSUL GENERAL DONNA BLAIR FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) Summary: On July 8, twenty of twenty-four Ogun State House of Assembly members began impeachment proceedings against Governor Gbenga Daniel (People's Democratic Party, PDP). Media reports state that many of the legislators then went into hiding, fearing assassination attempts. Both Governor Daniel's Chief of Staff Yomi Majekodunmi (PDP) and Governor Daniel's Press Secretary Wale Adedayo (PDP) had previously accused Chief Alani Bankole, father of Federal House of Representatives Speaker Dimeji Bankole (PDP), of plotting with state legislators to impeach Governor Daniel. Ethnic differences among Ogun's three zones, as well as gubernatorial aspirations (including Bankole's) in 2011, are at play behind the machinations; so is the House of Assembly's complaint that Daniel has not shared the spoils of his governorship with them. End Summary.

Impeachment Rumors and Proceedings Against Daniel

12. (U) On July 8, twenty of twenty-four Ogun State House of Assembly members began impeachment proceedings against Governor Gbenga Daniel. Both Governor Daniel's Chief of Staff Yomi Majekodunmi (PDP) and Governor Daniel's Press Secretary Wale Adedayo (PDP) had previously accused Chief Alani Bankole, father of Federal House of Representatives Speaker Dimeji Bankole, of plotting with state legislators to impeach the Governor. In a July 10 press statement, House Speaker Tunji Egbetokun (PDP) said the House had no intention of impeaching the Governor, but rather wanted him to control his staff, who were interfering with the House's ability to function.

Assassination Rumors Abound in Ogun

13. (U) Since the May 15 impeachment of former Ogun State House of Assembly Speaker Titi Oseni (PDP), tension and arguments between the legislature and executive branches of the Ogun State have steadily increased. In the past week alone, the media reported that Governor's aides alleged an assassination plot was underway against the Governor. Speaker Egbetokun (PDP) also alleged that Majekodunmi tried

to murder him but was foiled by security agents. On July 6, Governor Daniel's Press Secretary Wale Adedayo and Majekodunmi told journalists that some politicians had been attempting to murder the Governor by poisoning his food, and that Governor Daniel had to be flown to London for treatment twice in the past three weeks.

¶4. (U) On July 6, Speaker Egbedokun claimed that Majekodunmi and six other aides of Governor Daniel were arrested by security agents following a failed attempt to assassinate the Speaker and some other legislators, according to media reports. Egbedokun alleged that police seized several guns and cartridges from the men before they were detained for questioning. While admitting that he had visited Egbedokun at his residence, Majekodunmi denied any plot to kill the Speaker; instead, he insisted he had been working to resolve the dispute between the Speaker and the Governor. Prominent PDP leaders and traditional rulers have been holding meetings to resolve the tension, media reports say.

Machinations Linked to 2011 Elections

¶5. (U) Kehinde Kolawole, Director of the Community Human Rights Advocacy Center in Abeokuta, Ogun, told PolSpec July 11 that much of the tension in the state has to do with the 2011 gubernatorial election cycle for which jockeying has already begun. The informal zoning schedule within the state indicates that the next governor come from the Ogun Central zone. (Note: Daniel is from Ogun East; the third zone is Ogun West. These zones roughly correspond to the ethnic

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composition of the state: Ogun Central is home to the Egbas, Ogun West is home to the Yewa, considered to be the minority of the state, and Ogun East is home to the Ijebu. End Note.) However, Kolawole said, Daniel has allegedly supported the potential bid of the Ogun West zone; this infuriated prominent Egba politicians, who think Daniel, and Ijebu, is fueling Ijebu-Egba animosity by supporting the Yewa. Both the current Federal Minister for Iron and Steel, Sharafadeen Ishola and Speaker of the House of Representatives Dimeji Bankole, are from Ogun Central zone. Kolawole concluded that the removal of former Ogun State Speaker of the House Titi Oseni was part of a larger plan to weaken the Governor and put him on the defensive.

¶6. (C) Comment: Ogun is the site of former President Obasanjo's farm and until recently a bastion of stable PDP control. However, it appears that ethnic differences are playing a larger factor here than politics. Many perceived Daniel's campaign slogan of "Business Unusual" indicated his desire not to continue paying off workers and dispensing money and favors in exchange for political power. Governor Daniel is said to have failed to spread around to the House of Assembly the spoils of his governorship, which are probably considerable in light of the large infrastructure projects ongoing in the state. His attempt to keep the governorship in his zone is also an attempt to keep government resources at his zone's disposal. Speaker Bankole has gubernatorial aspirations of his own, which help explain his involvement in the state's ongoing dispute. End Comment.

This cable has been cleared by Embassy Abuja.
BLAIR